

The Status Report

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Charles F. Hurley Building, 19 Staniford St., 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02114
Web: www.mass.gov/women Phone: 617-626-6520 E-Mail: mcs@state.ma.us



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month



Did you know...?

The year 2007 marked the highest rate of domestic violence homicides in Massachusetts in the past fifteen years - 55 deaths occurred. As a result, 25 children were left without one or both parents.¹

As of September 19, 2008, there have been 30 deaths as a result of domestic violence homicides in MA.¹

In the United States, the cost of intimate partner violence exceeds \$5.8 billion each year, \$4.1 billion of which is for direct medical and mental health services.²

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) and domestic violence shelters and advocacy centers around the state are engaged in educating the public about the significance of the statistics such as the ones quoted above. Events and activities will be held throughout the month to promote awareness and encourage activism.

Events include vigils to remember the lives of the dozens of Massachusetts domestic violence-related homicide victims, family-friendly rallies, educational seminars and trainings, book signings, fundraising galas, art shows and more. For a complete listing of these events across the Commonwealth, please visit www.janedoe.org/involved/involved_awareness_temp.htm.

As part of its annual plan for fiscal year 2009, the MCSW has recognized the impact of domestic violence and has committed to working with such statewide organizations as Jane Doe Inc. to help raise awareness about this steadily growing issue.

Jane Doe Inc.'s website - www.janedoe.org - contains a wealth of information for individuals experiencing domestic violence as well as individuals simply seeking education on the issue.

The direct link to information on the dozens of domestic violence agencies and organizations throughout the Commonwealth is www.janedoe.org/safety.htm. There you will find DV agencies listed by region as well as a helpful map of their locations for your reference.



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Proud Member of the



¹ Jane Doe, Inc.

² Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2003

MCSW Elects Officers for FY09

During its September full Commission meeting the MCSW elected its executive officers for Fiscal Year 2009.

Commissioner Greer Swiston (West Newton) will serve as Chair of the Commission. Appointed by Governor Romney in 2005 and formerly the Commission's Treasurer, Swiston looks forward to leading the Commission towards successfully completing the tasks set before it during FY '09.

Commissioner Pam Malumphy (Pittsfield) was appointed to the MCSW by the Caucus of Women Legislators in 2007 and has stepped up early in her tenure to become elected to the position of Vice Chair.

Taking over the position of Treasurer and managing the MCSW's budget will be **Commissioner Elizabeth Houlihan** (Falmouth) who was appointed by the Caucus of Women Legislators in 2005 and served as Chair during the Commission's 2006-2007 year.

Appointed as a charter member of the Commission in 1998, **Commissioner Donna Finneran** will take the reigns as the MCSW's Secretary for FY '09.



Chair Greer Swiston

Commission Corner: Checking in with Commissions Across the Commonwealth

Berkshire Commission on the Status of Women Seeks New Commissioner

As an Appointing Authority to the Berkshire Commission on the Status of Women, the MCSW is seeking applications to fill a Berkshire Commissioner vacancy. The Berkshire Commission is comprised of 9 appointed women who have had prior experience working towards the improvement of the status of women. Commissioners are drawn from diverse racial, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation, and socio-economic backgrounds from throughout Berkshire County. Appointments are made by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women.

The Commission's duties include: studying, reviewing and reporting on the status of women in Berkshire County; promoting and facilitating collaboration among local women's organizations; recommending policies that benefit women to agencies, officers of the state, and local government; and holding fact-finding hearings and other public forums as it may deem necessary. The Commission meets at least 6 times a year, at the members' discretion.

To be considered for appointment, please submit a completed application package, which can be accessed at www.mass.gov/women, to: The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, Charles F. Hurley Building, 19 Stanford Street, 6th Floor, Boston, MA, 02114. Please remember that information you provide is public and cannot be kept private or confidential.

Somerville Commission for Women Celebrates 20 Year Anniversary

On November 6 at 6:00 p.m. the Somerville Commission for Women will celebrate its 20th Anniversary at the Visiting Nurses Association (259 Lowell St., Somerville). Please join them in a look back over the 20 years, learn more about what is happening now with all the changes in Somerville Commissions, and take a look forward in what's to come. Guest speakers will include the Executive Directors of the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, YWCA of Cambridge, and UMass Boston Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy. For more information, please call (617) 625-6600, x2406 or e-mail Somerville Commissioner Executive Director Sonja Darai at sdarai@somervillema.gov.

Brookline Commission for Women Hosts Women Who Launch Event

On Wednesday, October 15th the Berkshire Commission for Women hosted a free networking education opportunity with breakout sessions for current and prospective women entrepreneurs at Inner Space. Keynote speaker Colette Phillips, President and CEO of Colette Phillips Communications, Inc. addressed attendees. The "Effective Networking" series is a part of the Women Who Launch series and is brought to you and conducted by the Brookline Commission for Women, Brookline Economic Development and the Brookline Chamber of Commerce.

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MCSW Seeks Participation in Upcoming Regional Dialogues

What is a Regional Dialogue?

In its annual plan for Fiscal Year 2009, the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women has committed itself to hold five Regional Dialogues across the Commonwealth. Previously known as Public Hearings, these meetings will serve as a direct line of communication for the people of the Commonwealth, primarily women, to personally voice their concerns.

Testimony delivered by attendees is summarized in a report which is forwarded to the Commission's appointing authorities, state legislators, elected officials in the region where the hearing was held, key partners and women-focused organizations. The intention is that this information will be utilized to address issues raised to create legislation and public policy to improve the status of women in Massachusetts. The summary report is also posted on the MCSW website at www.mass.gov/women/publications/publications.htm.



Commissioners Marianne Fleckner, Pam Malumphy, and Linda Cavaoli take note of testimony made at the Amherst Public Hearing in March 2008.

What are the Issues?

The pressing issues that are of supreme concern to all residents of the Commonwealth significantly impact the women and girls of Massachusetts. Issues that have been discussed at previous hearings are: the importance of, yet inadequacy of public transportation; the need for affordable, accessible child care, housing and health care; the interrelatedness of domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness and homelessness; the links between education and employment opportunity; and the need for women's equal representation and leadership opportunities.

The MCSW has identified pay equity, teen pregnancy and domestic violence as its primary issues of focus for FY '09, and is particularly interested in developing and deepening its understanding of these issues. At the same time, testimony on any topic or issue facing the women of your area will be accepted, heard and reported to the MCSW's appointing authorities and the elected officials and legislators in your area.



Attendees listen to the testimony presented at the Amherst Public Hearing in March 2008.

How Can You Help?

The MCSW is looking to hold Regional Dialogues in the following areas during the noted timeframes.

- Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden Counties - October 2008
- Essex County (Danvers, Salem, Peabody) - First week in December 2008
- Framingham/Metro West - Late February 2009
- Northern Middlesex County - April 2009
- Plymouth County - September 2009

We are currently seeking constituents and organizations in the above regions to volunteer to host or co-host the Dialogue in their area. Hosting organizations would be responsible for securing a venue and aiding the MCSW in publicizing the

event to ensure healthy attendance. For more information on what hosting one of our Regional Dialogues entails please contact Outreach Coordinator/Interim Director Jill Ashton at jill.ashton@state.ma.us or 617-626-6525.

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Cambridge Women's Commission

On Thursday October 30th from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon the Cambridge Women's Commission will host the *Women's Data Workshop: What Do the Numbers Tell Us?* at Lesley University's University Hall (Porter Exchange Building, 1815 Massachusetts Avenue - 2nd Floor Amphitheater). Join them along with other City departments, agencies and key community partners in identifying opportunities to improve programming, policies and funding priorities for women and girls in Cambridge. The workshop is free, but participants must pre-register by going to www.cambridgema.gov/women/wws_register.cfm or calling 617-349-4697 on or before October 24th.

MCSW Participates in Treasurer's Money Conference

The Money Conference

A project of State Treasurer Timothy P. Cahill

more than two dozen organizations and corporations served as exhibitors distributing information to the eager attendees.

On Saturday, September 27th the MCSW participated as an exhibitor in what was Treasurer Timothy Cahill's most successful *Money Conference for Women and Families* to date. Held in Roxbury at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center, nearly 2,000 women pre-registered for the event and

"Many families in Massachusetts are scared and really struggling to get by in this tough economic time," said Treasurer Cahill. "Giving people the tools to take control of their finances is a priority for my administration."

Featured speakers included Dee Lee, national financial guru and author of *Women & Money* and *Let's Talk Money*. The conference curriculum offered practical advice and tools to help participants design and implement a personal savings strategy and develop a plan to achieve financial stability during this unstable time. Conference workshops included "Identity Theft: The Fastest Growing Crime in America", "Presenting Yourself Powerfully", and "Single Sophistication".

"*The Money Conference for Women and Families* now offers seminars for those with basic money management skills and another set of workshops for those with a higher level of financial literacy," said Treasurer Cahill. "Participants also have an opportunity to talk one on one with a financial advisor and it is all free."

The event was underwritten by Citi and sponsored by Bank of America, BlackRock, Chase, Citizens Bank, Fidelity Investments, Goldman Sachs, Invesco, Morgan Stanley, Sovereign Bank New England, State Street, SBLI and TD Banknorth in conjunction with the YWCA New England Regional Council.

Treasurer Cahill oversees the Treasury's Financial Education Department, which includes the *Saving Makes "Cents"* program, which is geared toward elementary school students, and ***Brown Bag Lunch Series***, a financial planning luncheon series. Other programs include *Smart Retirement & Beyond*, *Tomorrow's Money*, a program geared to help people become educated about investing and saving; and *Caution with Credit*, a program aimed at educating college students about credit card use. For more information regarding these programs visit www.mass.gov/treasury/financialed.htm or call (617) 367-6900.

20 Financial Planning Tips for These Tough Economic Times

The week of October 6th to October 12th was Financial Planning Week and the Office of the State Treasurer has offered the following tips to help you educate yourself on financial planning and how to better manage your money.

- Balance your checkbook.
- Make a monetary contribution to your favorite charity.
- Start a savings account for a child, vacation or a gift for yourself.
- Help teach your children how to save and spend wisely.
- Get your estate in order: create or revise your will and other estate planning documents.
- Call your financial planner and share your appreciation for their services.
- Pay off a credit card.
- Get a head start on college. Investigate college planning options.
- Establish an emergency fund.
- Evaluate your employee benefits and begin planning for open enrollment.
- Develop your holiday spending budget.
- Plan for year-end tax strategies.
- Purchase a relative, friend or colleague a session with a financial planner.
- Give a relative, friend or colleague a subscription to a personal finance magazine.
- Invite a financial planner to speak at your work place.
- Review your insurance coverage.
- Write down your short-term and long-term financial goals. Keep these in a special place and revisit them periodically.
- Start using personal finance software to help you see where your money goes and how it grows.
- Choose three financial terms that have always baffled you and resolve to look them up and understand them.
- Talk to a relative about their plans for long-term care.

Take Action. Get Educated. Get Involved.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in the movement to advance women in the Commonwealth you can start by attending any one of the number of events and meetings taking place across the state in the coming weeks.

Wednesday, October 22 (10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.): WAGE Project \$tart \$mart Facilitator Trainings

Location: Forkey Conference Room, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (100 Institute Road, Worcester)

Details: WAGE Project is hosting a \$tart \$mart Facilitator training at WPI. For more information on this program please visit www.wageproject.org/content/news. If you are interested in participating in this training please contact Annie Houle at ahoule@wageproject.org. Forkey Conference Room in the gym at WPI is difficult to find, so the group will meet in the Women's Program office, first floor Campus Center behind the information desk. The phone number in case you get lost is 508-831-5819.

Thursday, October 23 (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.): Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy Conference & Annual Meeting

Location: DCU Center (Worcester)

Details: 2008 Teen Pregnancy Institute: Expanding Opportunities for Youth and Young Families

The MA Alliance on Teen Pregnancy's statewide conference and annual meeting will feature Keynote speaker, Nicole Lynn Lewis (www.nicoleink.com). Visit the Alliance's website at www.massteenpregnancy.org for more information and registration options.

**Wednesday, November 12 (9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.): Crittenton Women's Union Annual Meeting and Release of Policy Brief**

Location: Nurses Hall, The State House (Boston)

Details: The Crittenton Women's Union will hold its Annual Meeting from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. Following the Annual Meeting, the CWU will release its joint project with The Center for Social Policy at UMASS-Boston - "**Fits and Starts: The Difficult Path for Single Working Parents**". RSVP for both events by November 7. Contact Lucy Seagraves at 617.259.2921 or lseagraves@liveworkthrive.org.

**Thursday, November 20 (7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.): Girl Scouts of Eastern MA - 17th Annual Leading Women Awards Breakfast**

Location: The Westin Copley Place (10 Huntington Avenue, Boston)

Details: Join the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts in honoring remarkable women such as Michele Courton Brown, Susan M. Esper, Kerry Murphy Healy, PhD, Ambassador Swanee Hunt, Laura J. Sen, and Liz Walker. Please purchase a ticket to the awards breakfast, invest in a sponsorship opportunity for your company or make a contribution to Give a Girl Scout a Seat at this inspiring event. For more information, please contact Heather Clyne Hughes at hclyne@girlscoutseasternmass.org or 617-482-1078, ext. 272 or visit www.girlscoutseasternmass.org.



Thursday, December 11
Boston Convention & Exhibition Center

Massachusetts
Conference
for Women

maconferenceforwomen.org

Thursday, December 11 (7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.): Massachusetts Conference for Women

Location: Boston Convention and Exhibition Center

Details: The Massachusetts Conference for Women, hosted in conjunction with the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, is a non-profit, non-partisan, one-day event where Massachusetts women can connect, learn practical and professional strategies from nationally recognized experts, and network with peers. Now in its fourth year, this upcoming Conference promises

to be more exciting, more educational and more inspiring than ever with dynamic speakers and panelists who are eager to share their experiences and opinions with participants of all ages, from all across the state. The Conference will honor inspiring women with our Be the Change Award, and attendees will hear first hand how the Conference is making a difference in people's lives. Nominate a woman for the Be the Change Award and register for the Conference by visiting www.maconferenceforwomen.org.

Do you have an event you would like to see on this list in an upcoming issue of The Status Report? E-mail the details to Program Coordinator Kim Sebastiao at Kimberly.Sebastiao@state.ma.us and we will do our best to include your event in our next issue.

Commission Officers & Members

Ruth Bramson, Dover
Linda Cavaioli, Worcester
Helen Corbett, Middleton
Deborah DiMasi, Boston
Erika Ebbel, Cambridge

Donna Finneran, Secretary, Mattapan

Marianne Fleckner, Westford
Catherine Greene, Esq., Brighton

Elizabeth H. Houlihan, Treasurer, Falmouth

Helen Jackson, MD, W. Roxbury
Angela Menino, Hyde Park

Pam Malumphy, Vice Chair, Pittsfield

Madhu Sridhar, Andover

Greer Tan Swiston, Chair, Newton**Commission Staff**

Jill Ashton, Outreach Coordinator/Interim Director
Kim Sebastiao, Program Coordinator
Darlene Kelter, Administrative Assistant

Commission Interns

Erta Kokalari, *Bunker Hill Community College*
Eglantina Malaj, *Salem State College*



19 Staniford St., 6th FL
Boston, MA 02114

Phone:

617.626.6520

Fax:

617.626.6530

E-Mail:

mcsw@state.ma.us

Web site:

www.mass.gov/women

**Do you have questions or comments about this
newsletter? If so, please contact**

MCSW@state.ma.us